



A member of the 90th Missile Security Forces Squadron verifies an ID at Romeo Launch Control Center Dec. 20, 2004.



Airman 1st Class Kenneth Driscoll, 90th Missile Security Forces Squadron, pulls Romeo Launch Control Center security gate closed Dec. 20, 2004. Although Romeo will no longer play host to missileers, security forces personnel will still man the site.

History in the making

400 MS shuts down Romeo LCC



Capt. Lee Taylor, 400th Missile Squadron, was the deputy crew commander during the Romeo Launch Control Center shut down.

Airman 1st Class Lauren Sixbey
Public Affairs

The 400th Missile Squadron quietly shut down the Romeo Launch Control Center near Chugwater, Wyo., Dec. 20, 2004, as a major step toward the deactivation of the Peacekeeper Intercontinental Ballistic Missile force.

This was the second of five launch control centers to be shut down.

The Peacekeeper deactivation began October 2002 and is scheduled for completion in September.

Every day of the year since 1964, a crew has come out to man the Romeo LCC.

“There is a sense of nostalgia seeing something so powerful go away,” said Capt. Carrie Owens, 400 MS combat crew commander. “We are all so proud of it.”

Captain Owens and Capt. Lee Taylor, deputy commander, were on duty during the deactivation.

Sixty feet underground they work in a capsule no bigger than a school bus.

There, the two young missileers

are the tip of the spear in the defense of the United States.

The Peacekeeper is the most powerful, most accurate missile ever deployed, according to Lt. Col. David Bliesner, 400 MS commander.

In 2001, President George W. Bush set a plan in motion to reduce the country’s missile forces from 6,000 to between 1,700 and 2,200. Russian President Vladimir Putin agreed to follow a similar plan.

Airmen from the 90th Missile Maintenance Squadron spend about 17 days deactivating each missile, while security forces ensure the safety of the removal.

After the deactivation is complete, missileers with the 400 MS will be either retrained as Minuteman III crewmembers or reassigned to other parts of the Air Force. Captain Taylor hopes to get picked up for pilot training, while Captain Owens will go to Vandenberg Air Force Base to teach.

“We’ve spent a lot of our time here,” said Captain Taylor. “There’s a lot of pride that goes into this job.”

The final deactivation, scheduled for September, brings an end to the Peacekeeper’s more than 16-year history at Warren.



Photos by Airman 1st Class Lauren Sixbey

Missileers from the 400th Missile Squadron will be retrained as Minuteman II crewmembers or scattered throughout other Air Force career fields.